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# Causes Behind Escalation of Juvenile Delinquency in Quetta City: A Case Study of Juvenile Prisoners in Balochistan Province

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## ABSTRACT

Juvenile delinquency is a substantial issue both universally and nationally, mostly in Balochistan. This study objects to explore the causes backing to juvenile delinquency in Quetta city of Balochistan Province. The research was conducted at one of the Jail, located in Quetta city of Province of Balochistan. Data was collected through two rounds of interviews: one with juvenile offenders and another with legal professionals. Information on the juveniles' age, education, socioeconomic background, family history, and employment status was gathered through structured questionnaires. The collected data was analyzed and compiled to identify the underlying causes of delinquency. The results revealed that juvenile delinquency in Quetta is driven by multiple factors, with poverty and illiteracy emerging as the most significant contributors. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to address the socio-economic challenges faced by at-risk youth in the region and gives a comprehensive approach that tackle systematic issues, support families and provide opportunities for youth.

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## INTRODUCTION

Every area of society is being impacted by juvenile delinquency on a daily basis, which is why it has become an international issue. The future of any nation rests with its youth. If they are engaged in illicit activities, the nation will face problems. When someone under the age of eighteen violates the law, they are considered juvenile delinquents. Juvenile delinquency is defined as any conduct committed by a child that violates the law. (Ahmed & Murtaza, 2010) Juvenile delinquency is a problem that exists

and is complicated in every community. In spite of several measures, it continues to expand. A behavioral imbalance is delinquency. That results from a variety of sources, including biological, psychological, and social environmental variables (Noorullah, 2015). Bartollas, et al (2008) stated that for rise in juvenile criminals, the Japanese community is supporting capital punishment. Drug abuse, cybercrime, and smoking are at an all-time high in South Korea (Hun-soo & Hyun-Sil, 2008). Last but not least, there is a concerning state of adolescent delinquency in America, the most civilized nation on earth. (Heilbrun et al, 2005). According to reports, the primary causes of adolescent delinquency in Pakistan are poverty, property crime, sexual offenses, lack of education, honor-related killings, hostility, and drug usage (Nadeem, 2002). A meta-analysis reveals Property conflicts, terrorist activities, child smuggling, blackmail, money snatching, lack of education, poverty, and water theft are the main reasons of juvenile crime in Pakistan.

In all capital cities of Pakistan minors are involved in

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crimes such as drug abuse, burglary, robbery, murder, and theft of motor vehicles (Aulakh, 1999). In Pakistan, records pertaining to juvenile delinquency are not appropriately maintained because of a shortage of funding and skilled inmates. Globally, juvenile delinquency has emerged as an issue and is becoming worse in every nation (Malik & Shirazi 2010). Table 1 displays province wise total number

of juvenile detainees in Pakistan from 1975 to December 2002. There were 4979 minors in all as of 2002. 3760 people in all of Punjab, 527 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 535 in Sindh, and Balochistan has a total of 157 people. Since Punjab has a larger population than other provinces, there were a lot of young people living there.

**Table 1**  
Total number of juvenile prisoners in Pakistan

Year	Punjab	Sindh	KPK	Balochistan	Total
1975	1799	847	530	190	3366
1985	3097	1601	651	354	5703
July 1993	2582	1367	904	484	5337
December 2002	3760	535	527	157	4979

Source: State of Pakistan Children 2001, SPARC

Balochistan is also concerned with juvenile delinquency. In the social context of Balochistan, especially the toxic environment nearer to the youth (such family and tribe), personality traits, social influence, and financial hardships

are additionally in charge of delinquent conduct in Balochistan (.Rose et al, 2017). As Table 2 illustrates, there were 36 juveniles in Balochistan in total in 2017, Of them, 34 were awaiting trial and two were found guilty.

**Table 2**  
Number of Juvenile Delinquents Baluchistan in December 2017

	Numbers of delinquent Juvenile	Male	Female
01	Juveniles Under Trial	34	0
02	Convicted Juveniles	02	0
03	Juveniles Condemned	nil	0
	Total	36	0

Source: Sheet of Prison Population by IG-Prisons Pakistan

**Significance of the study**

The primary reason this study is important is the paucity of research on problems pertaining to adolescent misbehavior in the particular setting of Pakistan’s Quetta metropolis. Every country’s future lies with its children. But they become criminals if they are not managed appropriately The risk to the nation will increase in this scenario. Juvenile delinquency can be caused by a variety of factors, such as poverty, illiteracy, socioeconomic class differences, etc. Since children from Balochistani cities are disproportionately affected by delinquency, this study will be important in reducing or eliminating delinquency. The study will offer improved advice for the youngsters, ensuring their safety from various forms of abuse while incarcerated. Notwithstanding international and national legislation pertaining to the reformation of children incarcerated The juvenile reformatory school has not received much attention. This study might shed light on the causes of juvenile delinquency. Additionally, the findings can raise fundamental awareness of this significant topic and inspire more extensive research.

**Objectives of the Study**

- The Study at hand revolves around the two main objectives
- To look at the causes of delinquent behavior
- To make recommendations for how to deal with the problem of adolescent delinquency.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

A number of study investigations in context of child delinquency have been completed resulting numerous drivers of juvenile delinquency such as social, financial and personal and many more elements so on. Media, the environment, and poverty investigated as primary contributors to children’s delinquent behavior. Furthermore, keeping young people in jail with adult offenders functions more like a training ground for them than it does to really put the juvenile justice system ordinance 2000’s regulations into practice. (Malik & Shirazi, 2010). In a different study, one of the Punjab province’s Borstal institutes examined socioeconomic aspects. The primary causes of juvenile delinquency were identified as poverty, low income, and illiteracy. Shamim et al. also came to the conclusion that kids from rural areas were more likely to commit crimes than kids from metropolitan areas, and that kids with poor incomes were more likely to commit crimes. (Shamim et al, 2009).

Low self-esteem was shown to be the primary cause of another study that was carried out in one of the Punjabi cities with 100 samples. There was a correlation between love and low self-esteem and between retaliation and low self-esteem, with 56% of the total reporting low self-esteem. (Dogar at el, 2010). A meta-analysis revealed a correlation between delinquency and personality traits. In Pakistan, there was a correlation between psychopathic deviants, depression, schizophrenia, and hypochondriasis and adolescent criminality. (Kausar et al 2012). A study found

that there was a significant chance that street children's delinquent behavior would rise. (Ahmad et al, 2012). Five schools from Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan were chosen at random for the study. The study focused on parenting styles in Pakistan overall, and it found that dictatorial parenting was associated with lower delinquency while reckless parenting was associated with more criminal activity and criminal nature in children. (Kausar & Pinqurat, 2016).

In a study, Talpur et al. examined social and cultural elements and how they affected adolescents' ability to rebuild criminal behavior in Pakistan. Delinquency was caused by poverty, dysfunctional households, substance misuse, maltreatment as a youngster, and family separation. In addition to an unstable social milieu, underdeveloped skills, and peer pressure, youth criminality (Talpur et al, 2011). According to a study, the media should promote positive messages and keep an eye on young people's activities since they are also accountable for delinquent behavior. The Punjab province's two distinct districts served as the study's locations. The study includes two juvenile detention centers and Borstal facilities. Through the scheduling of interviews, data were gathered. Of the inmates, 72% were literate. roughly 65% respondents' belong to poor homes therefore they turn towards dacoity, theft etc. and roughly 34.3% was killers. Delinquency was also caused by peer pressure and family structure pressure. (Akhter et al, 2015).

The study area was Districts Faisalabad and Bhawalpur, where two juvenile jails were situated total number of juvenile were two hundred and twenty one; were taken as population for data collection through a self-constructed questionnaire. The findings indicated that movies, separation between parents, the surroundings outside home, and the father's harsh demeanor all had a significant impact on adolescent crime. But the family's poor income is also a contributing factor. According to the report, parents should have intimate relationships with their children (Mehmood & Cheema, 2004). A meta-analysis revealed that a key factor contributing to adolescent delinquency was aggression. Addict youth with drug addiction exhibited increased aggression. Two groups, consisting of non-delinquents and delinquents, were randomly picked from public schools and the jail in Karachi, respectively. (Shahzad & Yasmeen, 2015). In Punjab, Pakistan, a qualitative study was carried out to look at the causes of juvenile misbehavior. Data was collected from several jails in Punjab. Concluded, for instance, that a variety of societal, economic, and psychological factors influenced adolescent delinquency. Delinquency was also influenced by restraint in behavior, negligence, inadequate supervision, peer and friend pressure, poverty, low educational attainment, poor academic achievement, and a lack of moral principles outside of movies (Ahmed & Murtaza, 2016).

The findings of the study carried out in the juvenile detention facilities in Nakuru town indicated that parental practices had an impact on juvenile criminality. Parents need to have an authoritative demeanor. (Warari,2015). Parental habits were found to have an effect on adolescent delinquency in a study conducted at the juvenile correctional facilities in Nakuru town. Parents must project an air of authority. (Ferdos & Ashiq,2015). A study involving 250 young

people, ages 9 to 18, was carried out in Tehran. Interviews were used to get the data. A number of demographic, social, and familial issues, including education, employment, family distancing, and drug use, were the primary causes of the rise in adolescent delinquency. (Noorullah et al, 2015). Juvenile delinquent conduct has been linked to both internal (such as treatments of parents with children and internal environment of home) and external (such as peer pressure and the outside environment) elements (Abella,2016). A meta-analysis came to the conclusion that the main factors preventing juvenile delinquency were all physical (drug addiction, starvation), psychological (psychological instability), family (broken families, poverty, hopeless association and relationships with parents and siblings), school (bad companies, grouping, bad school friendship), surrounding locality (movies, bad neighborhood), and working (unbalanced profession, idleness, monotony) (Bor et al, 1997).

In Pakistan, there is a high rate of youth crime. An investigation conducted in 2009 on juvenile offenders at the Rawalpindi Prison in Pakistan revealed that the main causes of delinquent behavior among young people in Pakistan were divorce, expulsion from school, poor financial circumstances, and criminal peers and relatives. Penal conditions and postponed justice exacerbate the issue. (Haider & Mahsud,2009). Bollywood films have a role in Pakistani criminality. Juvenile delinquents typically have immature minds that are easily influenced by movies. A study by Aslam et al. (2015) concluded that the content of Bollywood films contributed to juvenile delinquency and recommended that parents play a vital role in enlightening their kids about the appropriate use and selection of media. A study was carried out in Balochistan. Focus groups were used as the data collection strategy. The final result was Group discussions revealed that social influence, personality development within socially structured institutions such as schools, religious institute-related factors, and even financial factors were the main causes of juvenile delinquency in Quetta City, Balochistan. (Rose et al, 2017: Shagufta et al, 2017) Parents, culture, peers and environment outside home studied the variables that contributes to juvenile criminal activities.

Trends in adolescent delinquency are indicated by this study. Delinquency was mostly caused by elements like the United States' high rates of adolescent crime, low employment and educational attainment, and poor financial circumstances. (Jones, 2014). Jillani and Anees (1999) contends that civilization formed criminals. The lack of a stable family life, limited educational and career options for young people, and economic problems are the other causes. (Weatherburn & Lind 1997). Another study looked into the similarities and differences between the causes of delinquency in urban and rural areas. For example low socioeconomic condition, neglecting of child and abusing child. Thus, social and economic disparities were the main factors contributing to the rise in juvenile offenses. (Comanor & Phillips, 2002). Study by Bor et al (1997) showed that an additional predictor of the risk factor for an increase in juvenile delinquency was familial violence. (Breivik et al ,2009) demonstrated that an additional predictor of the risk factor for a rise in juvenile delinquency was familial violence. Burgess (1916) and Trillo & Redondo (2013) shown

that there is a connection between adolescent delinquent behavior and friends. Khursheed and Urooj (2012) identified a number of causes of juvenile delinquency; in Pakistani society, the primary reasons of juvenile delinquency were poverty and negligent family members. They came to the conclusion that the main culprits were poor families, divorced people, unsupportive friends and family, and the media. Juvenile crime was determined using a probity model. Juvenile crimes were determined by a number of characteristics, including property offenses, honor killing, low revenue, huge families and social relations as sources of motivation. (Khalid & Cheema, 2004).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

For this research inquiry, researcher used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Researcher made the decision to conduct this inquiry using a survey approach. At the Quetta Prison in Huda, the author personally had in-depth face-to-face conversations with young offenders who were contacted. Each interview was performed separately, and each respondent received assurances that his identity and personal data would be kept secret and not exploited.

### Data Collection & Variables of the Study

In this study, both primary and secondary data were employed. Primary data was gathered by means of structured interviews conducted with juvenile offenders and attorneys. For this, the author-created questioner was employed. Secondary data was gathered from a variety of sources, including government data, official publications, and books.

### Sampling

The research was restricted to one of the Prisons in Quetta Balochistan Province of Pakistan. From 2014 to 2016, every prisoner under the age of eighteen was taken

into custody. All the juvenile prisoners of 7 years to 18 years of age in the juvenile prison was picked as the target population of study. The entire population of juvenile offenders was used as the sample size because the study was limited to one prison and a population of just twenty-six inmates.

### Research Analysis Tools

A structured interview protocol used as the data gathering instrument. Two interview sessions were scheduled: one with juvenile offenders and the other with attorneys. Self-constructed questioners were used to ask various kinds of closed- and open- ended questions. After calculating the frequency distribution, the gathered data was tabulated for analysis.

## RESULTS & FINDINGS

To determine the elements that lead to juvenile delinquency. The information gathered led to the following conclusions. The average age of the male and female inmates was sixteen and seventeen years, respectively. Table 6 displays the age distribution of male juvenile offenders between 2014 and 2016. Ages 10 to 18 were considered, with 16% falling between the 13 and 15 age range and 84% falling between the 16 and 18 age range. It revealed that children aged 16, 17, and 18 had a high crime rate. Table 7 displays the age distribution of the 17-year-old female juvenile prisoner. Since there was only one girl, the proportion was 100%. Table 8 lists the male juvenile offenders' occupations, including whether they were students, workers, or neither. 43% of the workers had different jobs. Of the unemployed, 54% were not in school, and 3.8% were. It is evident that those without jobs were more likely to prone to delinquent acts. The occupation of a female juvenile prisoner is indicated in Table 9. The prisoner had no job. This demonstrated that the unemployment rate was higher than that of working youth and students.

**Table 3**

Age distribution of juvenile prisoners (Male)

No	Age/year	Frequency	Percentage
1	10-----12	0	0
2	13-----15	4	16
3	16-----18	22	84
Total		26	100

**Table 4**

Age distribution of juvenile prisoner (Female)

No	Age/year	Frequency	Percentage
1	10-----12	0	0
2	13-----15	0	0
3	16-----18	1	100
Total		1	100

**Table 5**

Occupations of juvenile prisoners Male

No	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Working	11	42.3
2	Not working	14	53.8
3	Student	1	3.8
Total		26	100

**Table 6**  
Occupations of juvenile prisoners female

No	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Working	0	0
2	Not working	1	100
3	Student	0	0
Total		1	100

Results indicate that 23% of male juvenile offenders lacked literacy. 34.6 had completed their elementary schooling. Middle passes made up 29.9%. Merely 3.8% were in intermediate, while 11.5% were in metric. Many young people lacked formal education. Table 10. The intermediate education level of a female juvenile prisoner is displayed in Table 11. The percentage distribution of male juvenile offenders' economic classes is displayed in Table 12. None

of them belonged to the elite class, according to the results. The middle class comprised two thirds of them. On the other hand, 73% were in a lower class. Many of the young people came from lower socioeconomic groups. Table 13 indicates that the female juveniles were middle class. Since there was just one young female prisoner, the proportion was 100%.

**Table 7**  
Education wise distribution of juvenile prisoner (Male)

No	Education level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	6	23
2	Up to 5 <sup>th</sup> class	9	34.6
3	Up to 8 <sup>th</sup> class	7	26.9
4	Up to 10 <sup>th</sup> class	3	11.5
5	Up to 12 <sup>th</sup> class	1	3.8
Total		26	100

**Table 8**  
Education wise distribution of juvenile prisoner (Female)

No	Education level	Frequency	percentage
1	Illiterate	0	0
2	Up to 5 class	0	0
3	Up to 8 <sup>th</sup> class	0	0
4	Up to 10 <sup>th</sup> class	0	0
5	Up to 12 <sup>th</sup> class	1	100
Total		1	100

**Table 9**  
Percentage distribution of economic class of juvenile prisoners Male

No	Economic classes	Frequency	Percentage
1	Higher class	0	0
2	Middle class	7	27
3	Lower/poor class	19	73
Total		26	100

**Table 10**  
Percentage Distribution of Economic Class of Juvenile Prisoners Female

No	Economic classes	Frequency	Percentage
1	Higher class	0	0
2	Middle class	1	100
3	Lower/poor class	0	0
Total		1	100

The distribution of male adolescent convicts by crime is displayed in Table 14. Murder, rape, theft, robbery, dacoit, cheating, and kidnapping were among the kinds of crimes. 35 percent of cases involved murder, while 19.2 percent involved rape and theft. Deception was found to be 11.5%, robbery was 3.8%, and kidnapping and cheating

were 7.6% and 3.8%, respectively. Table 15 illustrates the offense percentage of female juvenile convicts. There was not a single instance of rape, theft, robbery, or dacoit. The percentage for murder was 100. The source of juveniles' motivation for crime is displayed in Table 16. Only 11.5% of those who committed crimes were driven by friends

and family, whereas 88.5% did so on their own. In female juvenile prisoner the female was inspired by her mother.

The proportion is 100 according to Table 17. The percentage of self-motivation was zero.

**Table 11**

Percentage distribution of crime of juvenile prisoners male

No	Crime	frequency	Percentage
1	Murder	9	35
2	Rape	5	19.2
3	Robbery	1	3.8
4	Dacoit	3	11.5
5	Theft	5	19.2
6	Cheating/kidnaping	½	3.8/7.6
Total		26	100

**Table 12**

Percentage distribution of crime of juvenile prisoners female

No	Crime	frequency	percentage
1	Murder	1	100
2	Rape	0	0
3	Robbery	0	0
4	Dacoit	0	0
5	Theft	0	0
6	Cheating/kidnaping	0	0
Total		1	100

**Table 13**

Percentage distribution of motivation source towards Crime of juvenile prisoners

No	Motivation source	frequency	percentage
1	Motivated by others Parents/ friends	3	11.5
2	Self-motivated	23	88.5
Total		26	100

**Table 14**

Percentage distribution of motivation source towards Crime of juvenile female prisoners

No	Motivation source	frequency	percentage
1	Motivated by others Parents/ friends	1	100
2	Self- motivated	0	0
Total		1	100

A sample of sixteen lawyers participated in the second session with lawyers. They answered a question with no set answers. The majority of them explain that the primary reasons of adolescent delinquency were immaturity, media, poverty, carelessness on the part of families, peer pressure, and illiteracy. The majority of minors claimed to have been unfairly convicted. The attorneys couldn't agree on anything. In conclusion, the lawyers similarly believed that poverty and illiteracy were the primary causes.

**Discussion**

Many studies have been conducted on the root causes of teenage delinquency, both internationally and specifically in Pakistan. Still, there is a glaring dearth of research on this subject in Balochistan. This study aims to close that gap by examining the various factors impacting juvenile misbehaviour in the area. The study's conclusions confirm past findings and identify several factors influencing young people's delinquent behavior. For example, a study

conducted in 2004 by Ali et al. found that 74.3% of young people who engaged in delinquent behavior were between the ages of 16 and 18. Furthermore, the bulk of these young people had just completed their primary education, and their unemployment rates might reach 31.5%. Moreover, a sizable fraction of these young people were from low-income families. Similar findings were found in our study, which showed that 84.6% of the juvenile offenders were between the ages of 16 and 18. Adolescents with poor incomes and unemployment rates were also overrepresented in the criminal population.. Similar to our research, Ali et al. (2004) similarly found that a significant portion of juvenile offenders were self-motivated as opposed to affected by outside forces.

Haider and Mashud (2009) arrived at a similar conclusion, namely that delinquent behavior was largely caused by inadequate socioeconomic conditions. Our findings support this conclusion, as the majority of the juvenile offenders in our study came from lower socioeconomic classes. On the

other hand, Trillo and Redondo (2013) talked about the connection between having peers who are delinquent and the chance of becoming a juvenile offender. Our findings, however, differed from theirs because we found that the young people in our study were mostly driven by themselves rather than by their class. Furthermore, Khursheed and Urooj (2012) investigated the role of poverty, broken homes, media exposure, negative peer pressure, and bad family dynamics in contributing to adolescent criminality. Poverty was a key impact in our study as well, supporting their findings. According to Jillani (1999), sociocultural factors significantly contribute to the development of adolescent delinquency. These factors include unstable home settings, limited access to school, limited career possibilities, and economic disadvantages. The results of our study support these conclusions by highlighting the complexity of adolescent misbehavior.

In conclusion, a number of studies have determined that the main factors contributing to juvenile delinquency in Pakistan include poverty, a lack of education, peer pressure, ties to the criminal justice system, and self-motivation. Our study contributes to this body of knowledge by confirming the importance of these elements in comprehending and dealing with adolescent delinquency, especially in the setting of Balochistan.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study's main goal was to look at the variables that affect juvenile delinquency in Quetta. Therefore, a number of important implications have emerged from the study's findings. First off, the data show that 16 to 18-year-olds make up the majority of juvenile offenders, underscoring this age group's susceptibility to criminal activity. The impoverished living conditions of the inmates were a major cause of delinquency. Many juveniles originated from destitute backgrounds, with a major portion belonging to the lower socioeconomic class. Their poverty seemed to be a constant force driving their acts, pushing them toward illegal activity in their battle for basic survival.

Lack of education turned shown to be another important cause. Remarkably, 23% of the young criminals had never read or written a word, and 34% had just completed elementary school. Due to the void left by their lack of access to a quality education, these young people were more likely to engage in criminal activity. Due to their lack of resources and abilities, they were forced into a cycle of delinquency. Furthermore, a sizable percentage of the young criminals had committed serious offenses, such as murder. According to the data, 19.2% of the minors had stealing convictions under their records, and the same proportion had rape charges against them. These concerning figures highlight the seriousness of the crimes this age group commits and highlight the degree of brutality and transgression seen in their deeds.

Interestingly, this study found that peer pressure and criminal family history did not significantly promote adolescent criminality, contrary to popular belief. Unlike what is commonly believed, the young people were not being influenced by their peers or delinquent family members. This implies that their acts may have

more fundamental causes derived from economical and emotional hardships. This study's conclusion emphasizes that the main causes of juvenile misbehavior in Quetta are poverty and illiteracy. Delinquent behavior is mostly the result of these two circumstances, which also force many young people into a life of crime. Resolving these problems through social assistance, educational changes, and employment prospects may be essential to reducing youth crime in the area.

## Recommendations

Parents has a very important role by giving their kids the attention they need, keeping an eye on their activities, and on the people they hang out with, parents can play a crucial part in their development. Raising literacy rates must be a top priority for the government in order to address the substantial role that illiteracy plays in juvenile criminality. Furthermore, since a lot of societal issues, including delinquency, are seen to stem from poverty, government policies should prioritize efforts to alleviate poverty. It's also critical to raise understanding of how media affects kids, and kids, parents, and teachers should all get responsible media education. Furthermore, in order to guarantee justice, comprehensive and efficient juvenile crime investigations are required. Finally, in order to adequately meet the special demands and difficulties that young offenders encounter, the juvenile justice system needs to be reformed through legislative measures.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors has declared that no competing interests exist.

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